

## **Research, development and innovation strategy for the Hungarian textile and clothing industry**

The Hungarian Society of Textile Technology and Science established the *Platform for Reformation of the Hungarian Textile and Clothing Industry* (TEXPLAT) at the beginning of 2009 and its first year comes to its end in December. During this year the innovation strategy of this reformation has been completed and the prospects for the future have been formulated. All of these were accepted by the Platform Council on its expanded November 12 meeting on which 45 textile and clothing experts discussed in details the comprehensive report. Not only authors of the report were present on this meeting but also representatives of many enterprises and institutions who contributed with their important and constructive comments to the final text. This will be published at the end of this year and will be distributed to the companies of the textile and clothing sector.

The field of activity of TEXPLAT covers the part of the Hungarian textile and clothing sector that can be considered as progressive. Objective of the innovation strategy is to find the innovative, new and special fields of applications for textile goods where higher requirements can be fulfilled by them and where Hungarian companies can have chance to satisfy them. This means as well that the objective is to introduce innovative products and technologies that makes the textile and clothing industry knowledge-intensive sector and that are present in the high-tech industry sectors too.

For stabilization of the textile and clothing sectors it is necessary to reform them, to strengthen their innovation activity but, on the other hand, also to change the economic environment in this country. All of these could enable the enterprises to improve their development work and, in this way, to play greater role in employment than they can do now.

The work within the TEXPLAT project was done by four working groups. They made deep analysis of the present situation and consulted many times with a great number of experts from enterprises and institutions. Also public conferences (forums) and workshops were organized several times to formulate the research, development and innovation strategy of the Hungarian textile and clothing industry. The main objectives and tasks of this strategy are as follows, as the authors see:

### 1. Improvement of the competitiveness of the sector and of the enterprises

- Increasing of the added value incarnated in the products and services by improving of their quality and by adding of new functions to them.
- Enlargement of choice of products that can be used outside the textile and clothing industry, to offer more products for technical end-uses.
- Offering service to the market instead of only goods.
- Doing work requiring higher mental activity and resulting higher profit than to do simple, mainly only commission work; to achieve regional leading role in high quality level production of short series.
- Effective, flexible and cost-saving production on high quality level, also making short series.

- Improving of effectiveness of cooperation of the company managements and of the players of product chain by using of up-to-date info communication means.
- Increasing of number of companies that play independent, value-creating and decision-making role in the product chain, i. e. those who become prime contractor from subcontractor.
- Development and maximal utilization of machine and human resources.

## 2. Improvement of the level of research, development and innovation of the sector

- Better utilization of the results of research works in the innovation activity of companies-
- Development of infrastructure of innovation, development of innovative clusters.
- Increasing of number of innovative companies (“gazelles”).
- Establishing of innovative workshops of interior decoration and fashion.

## 3. Contribution to the sustainable development

- Reduction of environmental impacts during the activity of the industry.
- Production of products for other sectors that aid the sustainable development.

## 4. Realization of socially significant employment

- Development of human capital of the sector.
- Realization of an education system that meets the necessities of the sector.

## 5. Improving the prestige and self-respect of the sector

- Strengthening of cooperation and collaboration of the companies.
- Improving of the employees’ financial and moral recognition.

Concerning external factors, better conditions have to be created that help the entrepreneurs to find financial possibilities for supporting of their research, development and innovation activity. There are two ways for this at this time: the tendering system and the chance for borrowing. An other external factor is the level of education that should be increased in order to integrate the new results of research and development to the curricula. Practical training is the most important on all teaching level but also theoretical studies must not be neglected.

When the Innovation Strategy was deeply discussed on the above mentioned meeting great stress was laid on the necessity of forming a “lobby group” within the scope of TEXPLAT. Task of this group would be to prepare an action programme connecting with the subjects of interest protection and to take part of its realization.

TEXPLAT project is continuing. The main direction of its activity in 2010 is to work out a detailed Feasibility Plan on basis of the Strategic Plan, to generate projects on this basis as well as to further connections and cooperation with inner and external parties.

The full text of the Innovation Strategy and the studies made by experts for serving as a basis of it can be read on the website of the Hungarian Society of Textile Technology and Science – visit [www.tmte.hu](http://www.tmte.hu).